



City of Flint Master Plan Economic Development and Education Summary

Introduction

While known as a manufacturing center, Flint is establishing itself as a new kind of college town, a destination for medical sector companies, an intermodal and international hub for trade and transportation, and a center of innovation and entrepreneurship.

At the same time, Flint's current and future workforce is facing significant challenges with under-achievement, illiteracy, and unemployment. Economic development and education will form the foundation of the future Flint and there will need to be multisector alignment and substantial investments in people, places, and planning to achieve the vision.

Vision

We imagine Flint as a city that has a growing and diverse economy that spurs innovation and small business development and prepares our workforce for jobs that offer a livable wage.

Key Themes

- Prepare workforce for changing economy
 - » Strengthen educational attainment of youth.
 - Re-institute a sustainable form of community education through K-12 schools, community centers, and early learning sites.
 - » Provide adults with opportunities to gain additional education, skills, and training.
 - Increase functional literacy programming and track success.
 - » Increase access to employment opportunities.
 - Leverage relationships with all community organizations to improve access to reliable and affordable childcare services.
- Enhance small business and local entrepreneurship
 - » Ensure viable business ventures have access to capital and coaching, especially historically underrepresented groups.
 - Work with faith based organizations and non-profits to strengthen microloan or seed grant programs.
 - » Reverse leakage in currently underserved neighborhoods.
 - Promote development and incentivize the creation of neighborhood business centers to house small businesses to ensure consumer dollars stay local.
 - » Utilize business clusters to develop opportunities for small business ventures.
 - Leverage buying power of large city institutions (universities, hospitals, etc.) to promote local business purchasing arrangements with local businesses.
- Re-orient economy by repositioning land & diversifying industries
 - » Reposition Flint's land, natural resources, and infrastructure for sustainable growth.
 - Leverage cross-jurisdictional I-69 Trade Corridor to ensure maximum eligibility for economic incentives, and redevelopment opportunities.
 - » Diversify Flint's economic base by supporting and attracting industries in the growth sectors identified through regional cluster analysis
 - Strengthen ties between Flint's colleges/universities and those in East Lansing, Ann Arbor, and Detroit to further catalyze technology development.

- Attract new residents & businesses
 - » Highlight positive assets to change perceptions.
 - Champion Flint’s unique geographic position for the intermodal transportation industry.
 - » Foster reinvestment by strengthening the visual appeal of targeted areas.
 - Continue to prioritize blight elimination particularly along major corridors.
 - » Encourage and incentivize residential growth in the City.
 - Work with key employers and stakeholders to create a “Live Flint” Program providing incentives to encourage employees to live within the City.
- Ensure Flint is “open for business”
 - » Increase efficiency of City of Flint’s business-related services.
 - Work with business leaders to identify and eliminate unnecessary impediments or delays in permitting.
 - » Utilize public programs and tools to assist Flint’s businesses.
 - Coordinate incentives and infrastructure improvements for development of targeted sites related to business development and new housing

HIGHLIGHT: I-69 International Trade Corridor Next Michigan Development Corporation

The I-69 International Trade Corridor is home to major multi-modal sites, brownfield redevelopment opportunities, and industrial parks offering high quality/high value industrial buildings and acreage. There are nearly 750,000 residents within the Corridor, which covers 2,500 miles. As a “high traffic-low congestion” thoroughfare, the Corridor provides a multitude of transportation advantages including access to the Halifax Deep Water Port, as well as three deep water ports located along the St. Clair River at the Canadian border crossing. In addition, the area includes the Blue Water Bridge and Rail Tunnel to Canada, which are the third most active crossings between Canada and the United States. Flint is well positioned to take advantage of the I-69 International Trade Corridor designation as an important strategic commercial gateway between the Midwestern United States and Ontario, Canada, with multi-modal transportation infrastructure that offers a wide range of distribution options.

Highways

I-69 is one of Michigan’s “Corridors of Highest International Significance,” according to the Michigan Department of Transportation. The Corridor intersects with Interstates 475 and 75 in Flint, as well as US 23 and a host of state highways. The connectivity provided by these thoroughfares coupled with low traffic congestion make the Corridor the most effective way to traverse the state.

Rail

The Corridor is home to CSX and Canadian National railroads, which provide access to destinations throughout the continent. Connectivity to points east, west, north and south is available from the Flint Region.

Air

The western end of the I-69 International Trade Corridor is anchored by Bishop International Airport. Bishop International Airport serves approximately 1 million passengers annually and is an intermodal freight hub that accommodates cargo plane, truck, and train traffic.

Throughout the Master Plan, there are key strategies to promote Flint’s distribution infrastructure and our industrial property inventory in order to take full advantage of the I-69 International Trade Corridor.